

What is claimed is:

1. A data access and aggregation server for accessing and aggregating off-line message data for requesting users, access performed from a server
5 location point on a data-packet-network comprising:

at least one communication port for bi-directional data communication between the server and users accessing the server from remote access nodes having access to the network;

10 at least one communication port for bi-directional communication between a server and remote communications systems operating on a telephone network;

at least one data port for data communication between the server and a connected data repository;

15 a processor for storing server software and communication software; and,

20 a software application for enabling automated dialing and interaction with the remote communications systems, characterized in that the server responding to requests from users dials destination numbers supplied by the users and upon connection therewith inputs any access codes required to trigger data playback whereupon the server records the played data and renders the data available to the requesting users.

2. The data access and aggregation server of claim 1, wherein the data-packet-network is the Internet network.

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3. The data access and aggregation server of claim 2, wherein the location point is a server address on the Internet network.

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4. The data access and aggregation server of claim 3, wherein the communication between the server and users is hyper-text-transfer-protocol and the interface media is hyper-text-markup-language.

5 5. The data access and aggregation server of claim 4, wherein the software application is distributed in part on the server and in part on the accessing devices of the requesting users.

10 6. The data access and aggregation server of claim 4, wherein the software application is hosted in its entirety on the server.

7. The data access and aggregation server of claim 5, wherein the accessed data comprises voice messages personalized to a requesting user.

15 8. The data access and aggregation server of claim 7, wherein the accessed data further comprises voice messages that are accessible to the public.

20 9. The data access and aggregation server of claim 8, wherein the accessed data is accessed from the communications systems, the communications systems accessible through a telephone network.

10. The data access and aggregation server of claim 9, wherein the telephone network is the public-switched-telephony-network.

25 11. The data access aggregation server of claim 10, wherein the communications systems include answering machines, answering services, voice mail services, and pager voice mail services.

12. The data access and aggregation server of claim 11, wherein the communications systems further include, emergency information systems, traffic alert systems, weather alert systems, and movie information systems.

5 13. The data access and aggregation server of claim 12, wherein after data access and recording, the resulting data is rendered in the form of digital voice files downloadable over the Internet.

10 14. The data access and aggregation server of claim 12, wherein after data access and recording, the resulting data is rendered in the form of digital text data.

15 15. The data access and aggregation server of claim 14, wherein the digital text data is of the form of text summaries.

16. A network-based system for collecting, aggregating, and rendering off-line data for users having access to the network comprising:

20 a server node connected to the network, the server node having outbound dialing capability to connection-oriented-switched-telephony numbers and interaction capability with automated systems associated with the telephony numbers;

a data repository accessible to the server node, the data repository for storing information about users including telephone numbers and access codes;

25 a network bridging facility for bridging the network of the server node to the network providing access to the connection-oriented-switched-telephone numbers and associated automated systems;

US 2004/010901 A1

a telephone routing and switching facility for routing and connecting calls initiated from the server to individual ones of the automated systems associated with individual ones of the connection-oriented-switched-telephone numbers; and

5 a plurality of user nodes having access to the network of the server, the user nodes functioning as requestors and receivers of the off-line data collection, aggregation and rendering services provided by the server node, wherein the server node acting upon user request initiates and conducts telephone calls through the network bridging facility and the telephone
10 routing and switching facility to the automated systems associated with the connection-oriented-switched-telephone numbers for the purpose of accessing and recording message data, the message data rendered available to the requesting users through personalized interfaces operable through the user nodes.

15 17. The network-based system of claim 16, wherein the network is formed of a data-packet-network, a telephone network, and a wireless communications network.

20 18. The network-based system of claim 17, wherein the data-packet-network is the Internet network.

19. The network-based system of claim 18, wherein the telephone network is the public-switched-telephony-network.

25 20. The network-based system of claim 19, wherein the wireless communications network is a cellular network servicing cellular telephones and paging systems.

21. The network-based system of claim 20, wherein the user nodes are personal computers having connection to the Internet network and having access to the server node.

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22. The network-based system of claim 21, wherein the user nodes further include Internet-capable telephones having connection to the Internet network and having access to the server node.

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23. The network-based system of claim 22, or in the user nodes further include Internet-capable hand-held computers having connection to the Internet network and having access to the server node.

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24. The network-based system of claim 23, wherein the automated systems serve voice data and include answering machines, answering services, voice mail services, and pager voice mail services.

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25. The network-based system of claim 24, wherein the automated systems further include, emergency information systems, traffic alert systems, whether alert systems, and movie information systems.

26. A method for collecting, aggregating, and rendering off-line data for requesting users operating on a data-packet-network comprising steps of:

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(a) receiving a user request, the request sent from a user operating a user node having network access to a service-providing node operating on the data-packet-network;

(b) identifying at least one telephone number identified in the request, the telephone number addressing an off-line data source;

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(c) dialing identified telephone number and establishing a telephony connection to the off-line data source;

(d) retrieving the off-line data through automated telephone interaction;

5 (e) recording playback of the off-line data and storing the recorded data; and

(f) rendering the recorded data in a form downloadable to the user node.

10 27. The method of claim 26, wherein the data-packet-network is the Internet network.

15 28. The method of claim 27 wherein in step (a) the user node is a personal computer and the service-providing node is a file server with outbound dialing capability.

29. The method of claim 28 wherein in step (a), the personal computer and a file server communicate using Internet protocol.

20 30. The method of claim 28 wherein in step (a), the user node is an Internet-capable cellular telephone.

31. The method of claim 28 wherein in step (a), the user node is an Internet-capable hand-held computer.

25 32. The method of claim 27, wherein the off-line data includes voice data from one or a combination of answering machines, answering services, voice mail services, and pager voice mail services.

33. The method of claim 32, wherein the off-line data further includes voice data from one or a combination of emergency information systems, traffic alert systems, weather alert systems, and movie information systems.

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34. The method of claim 33 wherein in step (b), an access code identification is performed associating a data-access code with the appropriate telephone number identified in the request.

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35. The method of claim 34 wherein in step (d), automated telephone interaction includes automated input of the data-access code for triggering playback of data.

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36. The method of claim 35 wherein in step (d), determination of input of the data-access code for triggering playback of data is accomplished by voice recognition software responding to an interactive-voice-response system.

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37. The method of claim 35 wherein in step (d), determination of input of the data access code for triggering playback of data is accomplished by consultation a pre-configured interaction rules associated with the telephone number.

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38. The method of claim 33 wherein in step (e), the recorded data is stored has a digital voice file.

39. The method of claim 38 wherein in step (e), the voice file is a WAV file.

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